

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Withdrawn) A deproteinized natural rubber latex, which is prepared by subjecting to a deproteinization treatment using a deproteinizing agent comprising a protease and one or more water-soluble polymers as an active agent.

2. (Withdrawn) A method of producing a deproteinized natural rubber latex, which comprises adding a deproteinizing agent to a natural rubber latex, maturing the natural rubber latex, and washing rubber particles in the latex, wherein said deproteinizing agent comprises a protease and one or more water-soluble polymers as an active agent.

3. (Withdrawn) The method of producing a deproteinized natural rubber latex according to claim 2, wherein the amount of the deproteinizing agent is within a range from 0.001 to 10 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the rubber solid content in the natural rubber latex.

4. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a rubber product, which comprises adding a protease and one or more water-soluble polymers to a natural rubber latex, thereby subjecting the natural rubber latex to a deproteinization treatment, incorporating at least

a vulcanizing agent into the latex, dipping a mold in the resulting compound latex, and vulcanizing and drying a rubber film formed on the mold, wherein said one or more water-soluble polymers have at least one hydrophilic functional group selected from the group consisting of a hydroxyl group, a carboxyl group, an amide group, an ester bond, and salts thereof, with a principal chain of the polymer having from 100 to 5,000,000 carbon atoms.

5. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a rubber product, which comprises adding a protease and one or more water-soluble polymers to a natural rubber latex, thereby subjecting the natural rubber latex to a deproteinization treatment, incorporating at least a heat sensitizer and a vulcanizing agent into the latex, dipping a mold in the resulting heat-sensitive coagulable compound latex, and vulcanizing and drying a rubber film formed on the mold, wherein said one or more water-soluble polymers have at least one hydrophilic functional group selected from the group consisting of a hydroxyl group, a carboxyl group, an amide group, an ester bond, and salts thereof, with a principal chain of the polymer having from 100 to 5,000,000 carbon atoms.

6. (Original) The method of producing a rubber product according to claim 5, wherein the heat sensitizer is a water-soluble polymer type heat sensitizer.

7. (Original) The method of producing a rubber product according to claim 5, wherein the amount of the heat sensitizer is within a range from 0.1 to 10 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the rubber solid content in the deproteinized latex.

8. (Original) The method of producing a rubber product according to claim 6, wherein the amount of the heat sensitizer is within a range from 0.1 to 10 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the rubber solid content in the deproteinized latex.

9. (Withdrawn) The deproteinized latex according to claim 1, wherein the water-soluble polymer is a polymer having a bonding site due to at least one hydrophilic functional group selected from a hydroxyl group, a carboxyl group and an amide group and/or an ester bond, or a salt thereof, a principal chain of the polymer having 100 to 5,000,000 carbon atoms.

10. (Withdrawn) The method of producing a rubber product according to claim 2, wherein the water-soluble polymer is a polymer having a bonding site due to at least one hydrophilic functional group selected from a hydroxyl group, a carboxyl group and an amide group and/or an ester bond, or a salt thereof, a principal chain of the polymer having 100 to 5,000,000 carbon atoms.

11. (Withdrawn) The method of producing a rubber product according to claim 3, wherein the water-soluble polymer is a polymer having a bonding site due to at least one hydrophilic functional group selected from a hydroxyl group, a carboxyl group and an amide group and/or an ester bond, or a salt thereof, a principal chain of the polymer having 100 to 5,000,000 carbon atoms.

12-16. (Cancelled)